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THE

Moral Influences of Education :



AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,

AT

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BY *Edward Hubbard* E. H. HALLOCK,

OF RANDALL'S ISLAND.



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ADDRESS.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

I have the honor to address the members of that profession to-night, which, more than any other, must form the character and control the destiny of our nation.

Every day it becomes more and more apparent, that upon the faithfulness, ability and success with which the teachers of our youth discharge their varied duties, depends, not only the general prosperity and individual happiness of mankind, but the successful issue of the social problems committed to the American people for a practical solution.

That there is a growing conviction in the minds of our people that this is true, we have proof in the constantly increasing demand for thorough, efficient and devoted teachers; for teachers who understand something of the nature and the laws of the mind with which they deal, as well as of the knowledge they propose to communicate; for teachers who know how to stimulate and encourage—how to restrain and control—how to direct wisely every movement and impulse of the human soul—how to awaken the earnest attention of their pupils to an interest in achieving the best possible attainments for themselves—how to improve and perfect the whole man, and thus qualify him for whatever position on the busy stage of life a beneficent God may assign him.

If the work of the teacher, in the estimation of our people, is becoming of such vast importance, then it certainly requires a most careful and thorough preparation, a clear understanding of its nature, and a judicious and faithful performance of its duties.

We may, therefore, consider it one of the favorable signs of the times, that teachers have taken it upon themselves occasionally to assemble together to give expression to their thoughts, and contribute their experience towards the progress of this important

work. It is not enough for them to read, study and experiment in solitude ; but they must sometimes come into personal contact with others, and learn how they have studied, what they have read, how their experiments have succeeded or failed. If improvements are ever to be made in the work of education, teachers must at least do a *part* of the work ; and to insure success there is nothing like associated effort. It elicits the best thoughts and best acquirements, and throws them into the common stock of professional attainment. It gives us a new accession to our ideas, so that when we return to our school rooms, we can feel that we have received an additional impulse, a fresh interest in our work, a zeal that will enable us to infuse a new life into our pupils, new motives for enlarging their sphere of knowledge, which shall be to them an ever springing source of enjoyment and usefulness. It rouses up the whole man, brings into play his dormant faculties, and sends him to his work again a better teacher and a better man.

Our public schools (from which I suppose the most of us have come,) have long been and are the pride and glory of our people. That they possess elements of sterling worth and real power—that they vindicate their claims to the cordial sympathy and generous support of every lover of real progress—that there exists a feeling of confidence among the people of their stability, and a growing conviction that they are worthy of all the material aid that it requires to develop their capacity for good, no one will attempt to deny, who is in favor of the general diffusion of the means of education through all classes of the community, and the multiplication among us of conveniences for the acquisition of knowledge.

But who can freely move among our people, through all the avenues of society, and not feel that there is an almost indefinable *something* that is wanting to make our schools effectual in the accomplishment of the object for which they are designed—that many even of those to whom society looks up for guidance and control, are rapidly drifting into the fatal mistake of confounding the means of education with education itself, the conveniences for the acquisition of knowledge with a guarantee for the development of character ?

Our trust for the future is reposed quite too much upon the

provision we have made for arming the intellects of our children. The school-room, in too many cases, usurps the sceptre of home, and the instructions of the teacher are continually left to do the work which can only be done by the discipline of the parent. The habits of our people, the occupation and tendencies of American life, furnish, perhaps, a thousand *reasons* for such a state of things, but is there *one excuse*? Men immersed in business, struggling from early morn to dewy eve, may naturally be led to hope (if they think at all,) that the teacher to whom their children are entrusted can do all which their own career leaves them neither the time nor the spirits to attempt.

But that perfect obedience and wholesome reverence for just authority which lie at the foundation of all excellence and all strength in human character, cannot be acquired like reading and writing, arithmetic and grammar. Well will it be for our people when they are led to feel that the safety of all we hold most valuable in private or public life rests, at last, not on the excellence of our schools and system of education, *more* than on the fidelity of individual men in the discharge of their least obtrusive and most domestic duties.

These thoughts very naturally suggest my theme for this evening's discussion ;—" *The moral deficiencies in our educational system, and their remedy.*"

Two or three allusions to the past shall introduce my theme.

History informs us that those nations who have been the most successful in advancing the interests of mankind have each established and promoted, according to their own views on the subject, a system of education for their youth. These systems were suited to the spirit and genius of the people, and were almost invariably adapted to the production and advancement of those objects in which they supposed their national excellence to consist. When the children of Israel had escaped from the house of bondage, and the Theocracy had been established over them, He who made a covenant with them in Sinai taught them there was but one God; that He brought them out of the land of Egypt, that they should love Him with all their soul, mind and strength, as He was the only proper object of human worship. The being, perfections and government of God, together with the moral law prescribing the duties man owes to Him, to his fellow man and to himself, the

awards of eternity, with many other precepts, were explicitly declared by God, that by these plain directions He might lift the great heart of the nation towards himself. Not satisfied with these directions, He issued another of prohibition, saying "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth : thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them : for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me ; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments." The great end to be accomplished by this government was the worship of the true God. Hence it became necessary to give plain directions and stern prohibitions of idolatry, to prevent the entire overthrow of the Theocracy, and the undermining of those great moral foundations upon which it was based.

While this government was to be preserved by laws, it was to be enforced by promises and threatenings, by blessings on those who loved, and curses on those who hated the great Head and Ruler of the people. It was with this same view that heads of families were enjoined by those solemn words which furnished, in brief, a prescribed course of education for their children : " These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart ; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up ; and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes ; and thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house and on thy gates."

So long as the people regarded these directions, they were successful and prosperous ; but how soon after the system of education prescribed was forgotten, did the evils, against which the laws were enacted, pour in upon them like a flood !

Later in the world's history, we behold Greece training her youth first to simple reading, writing and arithmetic. To these she added music, gymnastics, attention to family sacrifices, and religious festivals. They were then put into the service of the state to serve in some military capacity ; after which traveling be-

came a fashionable resort to enable them to learn the wisdom of other nations as observed in their life, laws and custom. Finally the full developed Greek was introduced into the Senate to command by his opinions, delivered in an eloquent and manly style, the attention of Senators and the admiration of the people.

What she sought above all things else was the realization of the beautiful, whether in thought or deed. Thus educated and incited to great deeds by all the inspiring influences that filled that lovely land, the Grecian youth made haste to enter those fields of imagination and beauty which spread themselves afar on every side. It was their highest ambition to go forth, braving all privations and dangers, until their efforts being blessed they returned to their mother-land with many proud triumphs of art or genius.

Sparta kept the principle of perpetuating the glory of the state by the right education of youth constantly before her. Men of the highest character *only* were employed to do this work. Their systems, for severity of discipline and long continuance, probably have never been surpassed. Children were subjected to the most rigorous restraints, inuring both body and spirit to the severest privations and perils. Even the tables, at which all ate in common, were converted into schools where the old rehearsed their wonderful exploits to make their youth bold and daring on the field of battle. Military discipline was daily enforced; severe exercises and privations were seldom or never relaxed. To be successful in war and renowned in military life, was the great end aimed at in this rigorous course of discipline; and so far as that was concerned, an abundant success crowned their efforts.

Rome looked back to Greece, her model, and copying from her in many respects, originated in the west her own peculiar institutions of government and education, and infused into them all the fire of her fervid genius. In her institutions she sought to combine the wisdom of Athens with the military traits of Sparta, by which, with her own native strength and genius, of which she was not unconscious, she aspired to a government that should dazzle and conquer a world. She received the Grecian schoolmasters, building for some her splendid schools; and for others she threw open her temples and dedicated them again to the charms of poetry and philosophy. Her system of education was much admired—the utmost attention being given to the early formation of mind and

character. The greatest possible attention was given to the cultivation of a pure and correct expression by the Roman teachers, as the honors of the Republic were the prize of eloquence.

All the delights of scholarship, and especially of oratory, were eagerly sought after as it needed them to adorn the patriot and representative of Roman greatness, whether he contended in the forum or in the field. Eloquence and the military art, being the surest road to preferment, were made the highest objects of pursuit of Roman youth.

The Roman people believed that their institutions were the best that man had yet devised for himself; and undoubtedly they were, assuming, as they did, that the service of their country was the great end of life. In their days of prosperity, their magnificence and luxury were unrivalled. They were enriched by their generals with the spoils of a hundred nations; and the wealth of the most potent monarchs was poured into their coffers. From the Atlantic to the Euphrates it was one great Roman field; and with all its lovely islands and fruitful shores, the Mediterranean was a great Roman lake. All the countries of Europe received their laws from the Italian capital, and all sent it their annual tribute. With their one hundred and twenty millions of subjects, this region included the whole of the world's intelligence, and nearly all its wealth. With its beaks of brass and talons of steel the Roman eagle had overcome the human race. So far as wealth and intelligence were concerned, the great objects especially had in view in the education of her youth, the efforts of Rome were crowned with a well earned success. Could the healthful and purifying influence of the Christian religion, with all its pure precepts, have only descended upon and been accepted by her people, so that the dross might have been purged away by lifting the great Roman heart from an earth-born and corrupting mythology to the worship of the true God, who can deny that her institutions might, after regenerating all Europe, have stood forth to day the glory and wonder of the world?

But it was far otherwise. Amidst all this civilization there was a time of fearful depravity. Man had tried in vain to better his condition. In every effort of freedom there was only a deeper plunge in darkness. The people lost faith in one another, and there was nothing to inspire the fervor of patriotism. Revenge

and despair gnawed at the heart of down trodden millions. Man had really accomplished *nothing* for himself. In this state of hopeless wickedness and general wearying for change, the road was made ready, the path made straight, and the GREAT TEACHER came.

He taught us no longer to contemplate man in the dim light of those ancient philosophies, which limit his career to earth and some exalted place in the government under which he lives ; but as something above and beyond all place—that though life's seed may be sown here, it is nevertheless to bloom hereafter far above the utmost verge of this small world, which had so long bounded the vision of her philosophers. He scattered the truth and securely planted it in human hearts, and nursed a power destined to overthrow all error, revolutionize social organization, and regenerate a sinful world.

Citizenship in this republic of ours, then, differs widely from that of the republics of old. Instead of reason's first tottering steps towards truth, we have it from the lips of Him who spake as never man spake ; and if we will only put it into peaceful and universal operation, it will regenerate a sinful world and make it truly free. Our position to-day is indeed enviable and one of great responsibility, for we stand on the heights to which those who have gone before us have lifted us, and a high trust is committed to our care. Let us remember that what we have in science and literature is not all of our own achieving, for all the nations of antiquity have contributed of their poetry, philosophy, eloquence, histories and splendid works of art. Having reared our temples in this new world, let us appoint Intelligence, Truth and Virtue as their chief corner stones, and make the great end for which we labor—the great end for which we educate our children the great end of *our* national existence, not only to establish a free government, but the development—the ever progressive and harmonious development—of all the faculties of individual man. I venture to say, fellow teachers, that the greatest desideratum in our country to day, to enable us to accomplish the end of our national existence, is a judicious education of our youth in that broad and thorough culture which takes into its scope all the faculties of man ; as the greatest want in human society is man himself—man, “broad shouldered, symmetrical, swift—man purified,

ennobled, exalted—man trained, individualized, educated"—man, not only physically and intellectually developed, but with a high *moral* and RELIGIOUS culture, such as acquaints him with his DUTIES as well as his *rights*, his relations to his fellow man, and above all with that God from whom cometh every good and perfect gift; for well hath the poet said:

"Acquaint thyself with God if thou wouldst taste
His works. Admitted once to his embrace,
Thou shalt perceive that thou was blind before;
Thine eyes shalt be instructed; and thine heart,
Made pure, shall relish, with divine delight
Till then unfelt, what hands divine hath wrought."

When we speak and think of the education of our children, do we clearly understand what a child is, what is the true *idea* of his development? Do we not make use of the term *knowledge* too exclusively? Is it not too much the object of the American parent and teacher to make the child a knowing man, a knowing woman? Are there not words that better express the true idea—wise and understanding?—words consecrated by the Bible, the book of books. Knowing people are not always honest, and *dishonest* people are never wise. This is a truth too large to be scanned by the mere knowing spirit.

"Knowledge and Wisdom, far from being one,
Have oft-times no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which wisdom builds,
Till smoothed, and squared, and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems to enrich."

The education, therefore, that brings down men to the condition of mere knowing animals, is one that ignores the God given faculties of our nature, and the proper consideration of man's immortal destiny. Is that man an educator who ignores conscience, religion, taste, imagination—who overlooks the noble passions which cluster around the heart, and devotes himself exclusively to filling the minds of children with knowledge merely? No! our business as educators in the sanctity of our own homes, in the school-room, and in all the relations of life, is to remember

that these powers were given of God to be developed by our guidance and training ; for what is the object of education, but to form a perfect character, such a character as can stand up and say in the presence of men, I too am a man, having devoted myself now and always to the truth and right. Is there not something above all price in a conscience well instructed and void of offence, which can stand poised on its own integrity, looking away from the capricious verdict of to-day to the calmer and juster verdict which it shall receive at the hands of posterity, and the still more righteous decision which shall be pronounced by a divine tribunal ? Let us write, then, on the walls of our school rooms, and on the hearts of our children, "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city;" and that all education is worthless that does not *begin* and *end* in the fear of the Lord.

But I fancy I hear you asking how I propose to accomplish this work. I answer, *Parents must begin it. It must originate in the family.*

The family power is the fountain of all the moral influences in the world. During all the patriarchal ages, the family alone nursed and kept alive the worship of the true God. But for such an arrangement, the religion of the Bible would not have survived the flood. The influence of the family in moulding human character cannot be over estimated. It takes man at the nursery, and educates him for life. Some one has said the very handling of the nursery is significant ; that the petulance, the passion, the gentleness, the tranquillity indicated by it are all reproduced in the child. His soul is then of a purely receptive nature, and for some time forward without choice or selection. There is no time to be lost then. How frequently parents have asked teachers when or at what age they should begin to govern their children, little thinking that they had already lost too much time. We must begin higher up with our children. We must watch the infant in its mother's arms. We must see the first images which the external world casts upon the dark mirror of his mind, the first occurrence that he beholds. We must hear the first words that awaken the sleeping powers of thought, and stand by his earliest efforts, if we would understand the prejudices, the habits and passions that will rule him in after life. We must just at this very critical period in the child's history begin to train the *better* qualities of his nature before the baser passions get the ascendancy. How strong the

tendency when first we gaze upon the winning features of a little child, to predict for it a happy destiny ! The lessons of experience, however, teach us that it will depend very much upon the character that shall be developed, even in this earlier stage, by a mother's influence. A little farther on he copies everything he sees. He imitates the voice, the manner, the gait, the actions, and imbibes the character of those with whom he comes in contact. In our every day's intercourse with our children, when we are meaning them neither good nor evil, when we are not conscious of exerting the least influence over them, they are receiving impressions and moulds of habit which, if wrong, no heavenly discipline can wholly eradicate ; and if right, no bad associations of ideas in after life can entirely dissipate. Is it not a matter of some doubt whether, amid all other influences combined which are exerted upon the minds of men, as much can be done towards shaping their future destiny as during the time of their earlier years around the family fireside, where, cradled amid ties and influences the strongest, the most powerful and subtile than can mould human character, direction may be given to the mind and heart, restraints, scarcely felt yet all powerful, may be laid upon depravity, the mind may be accustomed to obedience, virtuous habits may be formed, and the good qualities may be nursed and brought to maturity ? If this be true, then a whole generation of future men and women that are to mould and fashion society and give it character, are receiving their most important lessons, and the deepest impulse of their life an immortality, around our family firesides. Let me interrogate that fond mother who watches from day to day over the growth and progress of that little one, and perhaps luxuriates in joyful anticipations over the time when he shall walk before her in all the pride and strength of early manhood, if she has pondered well the mighty trust committed to her care. Has she taught him morality—a piety which, begun in truth, advanced in justice, is finished in kindness to every living thing ? Has she taught him self-government, industry and economy, self-denial, the exercise of the gentle affections, civility and sweetness of temper, prudence of tongue, and to avoid temptation ? If not, let the work begin now, and continue with unwearied patience and perseverance, by both example and precept for her own prosperity, the welfare of her son, and the glory of God.

Look out upon the restless workings of society to-day, amid all the varied scenes of busy life and the hum of busy men, and then retire and ask what it is that gives character to all this? What is to fix its future destiny for good or for evil? I answer unhesitatingly—THE INFLUENCE OF MOTHERS.

Second.—Parents must provide good school houses for their children.

It is of the very highest importance that parents provide for their children comfortable, convenient, well ventilated and well furnished school houses. If there is one house in a district more pleasantly situated, more comfortably constructed, more inviting in its general appearance, and more elevating in its influence than any other, that should be the school house where our children get their first impressions of life. Prosperity and industry, through the ability which they create, have given comfort and elegance to private dwellings. Public spirit has erected commodious and more costly churches, handsome and spacious court houses and public offices. The great heart of humanity has been aroused, and made generous and noble provision for the pauper, the blind, deaf, dumb, insane and inebriate; and even the receptacles of felons, and other offenders against the laws of God, have been in many instances transformed by the more enlightened spirit of the age into comfortable and healthful residences. The beasts of the field, the cattle upon a thousand hills, have not been overlooked in the general spirit of reform, for the husbandman has not neglected to furnish better stables for his cattle and folds for his sheep. But the school houses, to which the children, the dearest interests of humanity, are sent, and to which they should be wooed by every possible attraction, are even *yet*, in *too many* cases, left the loneliest and most forbidding buildings in a whole township. Go with me to that low tenement, situated on the public street, with its worn out sides and moss covered roof affording sufficient evidence that the storms of many, many winters have beaten around it, while many generations of children have come and gone, carrying with them no other associations than of weary limbs and aching heads, of many misspent hours in an impure and deadly atmosphere, producing petulant and sensitive pupils, worn and languishing teachers, and a perfect dread and horror for the place called the school and every thing pertaining thereto. There the building stands; and judging from the coldness, indifference and neglect of those to

whom have been committed its care and keeping, it is doomed to a slow but sure decay. Let us glance at its internal arrangement and behold its diminutive size, its rough and filthy floors, low ceiling, dilapidated desks, slab seats, dingy walls, the unhappy and cheerless inmates, and general disorder that reigns everywhere. Listen to the recitations, and see how perfectly they correspond with the condition of things already noticed ; and I judge you will be prepared to run away from this dark and forbidding aspect, and seek relief by passing on to yonder tasteful and attractive edifice. See its fine proportions, pleasant site, ample play ground all studded with beautiful trees, thus making the spot to which children daily resort a place crowned with all earthly loveliness and grace. There is an influence perhaps we cannot explain, yet nevertheless apparent, in these outward surroundings of children that moulds and fashions character. The aspect of nature, the works of art that children look upon, that their hearts cling to, have an almost omnipotent power to form their tastes, and so closely are tastes akin to morals, that they contribute very much towards their moral improvement. If therefore, parents would set up an everlasting barrier to the inroads of vice and crime, let them combine to make their schoolhouses a thing of beauty, and to their children a joy forever. But ere we leave this pleasant spot, let us extend our observations. Let us enter the school-room. Its internal arrangements correspond with those without. It is neat, well ventilated, well supplied with desks that are both comfortable and ornamental, with maps, charts and black boards. Its walls are ornamented with maps and pictures of the children's own drawing. How elevating the influence of such a room ! As we look around upon these things and witness the sparkling penetrating eyes of the happy children, who can believe that their opening and yearning hearts are not ready to receive and appreciate the beauty of truth, honor and virtue that glow and burn all around them ? The teacher is a man of courteous manners, refinement of feeling, elevated mind, lofty bearing, thorough and efficient in his business ; and prompted by his own lofty example and precepts, the children imbibe correct habits of study and thought, neatness and order, refinement of manners and good morals. This is the way to improve character, raise the thoughts higher, awaken sleeping talent, develop all the faculties

of the human soul, and qualify our children for an able, just, right and honorable discharge of all the duties of men, of citizens, of patriots.

Third.—Parents must select men for teachers who have moral fitness.

Parents ought to consider well the moral fitness of him who proposes to conduct the education of their children. This is paramount to every other consideration. Intellectual acquirements, though indispensably necessary to make a man thorough and efficient in his teaching, will never fit a man for the high vocation of a teacher of youth, without deep moral principle. He may infuse much valuable knowledge into the minds of his pupils, but that alone will not develop a true character ; for while it is true that "Knowledge is power," it is just as true that knowledge, without principle to regulate it, may make man a powerful villain. The teacher is a living epistle, known and read of all men. He teaches as he goes in and out before his pupils as words can *never* teach. The school, therefore, is no place for a man without *principle*. In the language of the lamented PAGE whose name is deeply engraved in letters of living light on the hearts of all who knew him, "Let such a man seek a livelihood elsewhere ; or, failing to gain it by other means, let starvation seize the body, and send the soul back to its Maker as it is rather than he should incur the fearful guilt of poisoning youthful minds and dragging them down to his own pitiable level. For," said he, "if there can be one sin greater than another on which heaven frowns with more awful displeasure, it is that of leading the youth into principles of error and the debasing practices of vice." But is not this principle too much lost sight of, even to the detriment of our schools ? The question wielding as much influence as any other, *has been* and *now is* to an alarming extent, "Who is the lowest bidder ?" Allow me to refer to a case, illustrative of this point, that occurred in one of the eastern towns of this county. One day in the latter part of the month of October, just at set of sun, one of the trustees of a village school called upon a teacher with the request that he should conduct their school for the ensuing winter. The request was cordially accepted on condition that it was the unanimous wish of his associates and the people they represented. The following Saturday evening being chosen as an appropriate occasion to meet the trustees at the house

of one of their number for the purpose of officially confirming the contract, the trustee proceeded homeward, and left the teacher to revolve in his mind the duties of his prospective position. As he went forth the following day to his accustomed labors, he thought that as the long summer months had been spent in first preparing the soil, then sowing the seed, and finally cultivating the tender plant till he had gradually discovered the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear which he was now gathering as the ripened fruit of his summer's toils, so he was about to enter that field which, if entered with the same diligence and persevering industry, might be kept in living green, free from untoward influences, into that field where he was to train deathless plants which, if nurtured aright, would become ornaments to the hillsides and valleys of our beloved land; but if neglected would prove a curse to the gardens in which they grew, to the communities whose atmosphere they should taint, and a detriment even to the character of those who should trample on the mind, that deathless thing, and lay rude hands upon

“God's mysteries there!”

Saturday night came. At the hour he was kindly received at the appointed place. “Well,” says one, “would you like to teach our school this winter?” “I have been requested to do so,” says the teacher. “Do you think you can govern our boys?” says another. “I can try,” was the prompt reply. “We continue our school four months. What salary would you require for that time?” says a third. “Fifty dollars,” says the teacher. Here a solemn pause ensued, as if this *were* the most momentous question. Each seemed to wait for the other to incur the responsibility of speaking. Silence, however, was finally broken, and one ventured to assent to the proposition, to which all agreed. The time being proposed for opening the school, the teacher bid them good evening, and left them to their own meditations. The next day being the Sabbath, the teacher went to church and listened to a discourse based on the following selection from Proverbs: “He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city.” The speaker appealed to his people with earnestness and power, urging them to a more thorough moral and religious training of their children. After the services were closed, the congregation

dispersed ; and as the teacher was walking leisurely over the adjoining ground, he met one of the trustees, who with half-suppressed and trembling voice, said, "Sir, I am very sorry to inform you that the trustees have changed their minds. A new applicant appeared last evening after our contract with you and offered to take our school for forty-eight dollars, making a saving of *two dollars*; and being the servants of the people, we did not feel at liberty to sacrifice these funds from the treasury of the district." Now is it too much to say that the circumference of the "Almighty Dollar" still confines the minds of men so closely that, in *too many* cases they cannot look beyond it, even though it be for the eternal well being of their children ?

Second.—The second method of promoting the moral welfare of our schools, is by the labor, example, and influence of the teacher.

This whole subject is summed up in these eight words : "as is the teacher so is the school." The teacher, in the first place, should learn to take things just as he finds them, all discouraging and objectionable, though they may be, and not separate himself so much from the *real* as to annul his influence and power in his efforts to bring about the desired result. Let him so far understand the nature of the ground he is to cultivate, that he may be able rightly to adapt his means to the accomplishment of his ends. Let him learn what he can of the habits, feelings and opinions of the people among whom he labors, and then with a common sense view of matters labor wisely and perseveringly to rectify errors, effect a right feeling, and patiently

"Learn to labor and to wait."

He should seek especially to make good the first impression on his pupils. Failure here may not only ruin the teacher, but have an abiding influence for evil on his pupils. Never shall I forget when, some twenty-five years since, some sixty pupils had assembled around the schoolroom somewhat before the hour, huddling ourselves together like bees, all humming away in language about as intelligent, awaiting the advent of the new "master." Just at nine he arrived. Solemn stillness reigned as he approached. All waited till he was fairly into the room, when, with all sorts of discordant sounds, there was one general clashing of human voices,

which, could it have been put into language, was designed to try of what manner of spirit he was. The teacher came to the door with angry look, and still more angry voice, and cried out, "Boys, come in!" All passed in and sat in stillness awaiting the first words of him who was to spend the winter in developing mind. He placed himself in the rear of his desk and took out his long ruler, and holding it up, said, "I shall expect you will always answer me the first time I speak, and obey at the first command. If not it will be a word and a blow, and the blow will come first." Little did he realize he had committed an error that time would never correct. Not an impression do I retain of that winter's labors save of perfect contempt for the man and of disrespect for his teaching. Had he in a manly and dignified manner, with the love of truth beaming in his countenance, addressed us in the language of courtesy, which always springs from real kindness and ever becomes a man of character, every pupil would have felt the keenness of the rebuke; and he would have assimilated every heart to his own, and fixed an impression that would have ripened into mutual improvement of mind and heart.

No man can rightly conduct the education of youth, unless he has in himself the very characteristics of excellence with which his pupils should be adorned; for what is in the man will come out, in spite of all tricks and masks. He must be prompt, regular, full of the spirit of truth. His principles of life, his personal habits, his tastes, his whole bearing and demeanor, have much to do in forming the spirit and shaping the destiny of his pupils. He must have a sympathy for them, and not mistake thoughtlessness for willful wrong doing, physical and intellectual deficiencies for laziness and inattention. He should sacredly appropriate every moment of time to its specific use, that his pupils may know what to expect every hour in a day, so as to avoid any possible excuse for idleness or mischief. This being done, every possible care should be taken that every thing be done right, *exactly, precisely* right. The teacher in his daily walk, as he goes in before his pupils, should give them high views of life and its duties. He should teach as the fundamental basis of character a love for the truth, the *exact* truth, and bring it to bear on the conscience, as no great moral revolution in character can be effected without it. He should open to the minds of his pupils new worlds of intellectual life and moral

perceptions of which before they had no idea. He should be in earnest and make his pupils so ; for earnestness itself is a high talent, and is attractive in every department of life. He will thus stir up the soul to higher aspirations after duty and obedience to God, as the highest prerogative of man.

He should arouse his pupils to new and noble purposes, and wake up their minds to a moral energy that no other influence will ever be permitted to smother, and which will make them ashamed of low views of duty ; and should cultivate the loftier faculties of their nature, and thus stifle the growth of the baser passions, which if permitted to gain the ascendancy, will darken the pathway of life.

To be successful in teaching mathematics, it is necessary to watch carefully the mind's first steps in the earliest stages of its exercises, that we may be sure that perfect vigor of intellectual discipline is attained, that there be no yielding to juvenile impatience, tending to laxity of attention, careless assumption, heedless oversight, and unconscious inaccuracy of mental habit, that in the more advanced stages of progress the pupil shall have acquired a correctness of habit which will sustain him through all the difficult evolutions of that abstruse science. This is especially true in all that pertains to man's moral development. Not the slightest deviation from right should ever pass unnoticed. If so, it will soon become a fixed habit ; and a habit once fixed, is not easily broken. Under whose ever care, then, a child is put to be taught during the tender and flexible years of his life, this is certain ; it should be one who, knowing how much virtue and a well tempered soul is to be preferred to any sort of mere intellectual culture, will make it his chief business to form the mind of the child, and give it a right disposition, which, if obtained, though all the rest be neglected, would in time produce all the rest ; and which, if not obtained and settled so as to keep out ill and vicious habits, all other learning combined and accomplishments of education will be to no purpose but to make the worse or dangerous man.

To do such a work requires, in addition to the qualities mentioned, hard, untiring labor. There is no substitute for it. *Labor*, LABOR, LABOR only will do the work.

Let the doors of every schoolroom in the land be forever

closed against the lazy man. When a teacher commences a recitation, let him not sit in his seat and attempt to *teach*, neither let him be confined to his book. But let him always be thoroughly prepared by previous study for his recitations ; for if not, he is not prepared to fulfil his duty even as teacher of the intellect, and certainly not if he will be an educator of the soul. Let a teacher speak to his class from a full mind, and he will speak wisely ; then he will speak with eye as well as tongue, with his hand, his beaming face and every muscle of his frame. Let him freely mingle with his pupils, animating, encouraging, sympathizing and breathing life into less active natures, assuring the timid, distributing encouragement to all. If he do this, no matter what he teaches, he will always infuse moral life into his pupils. If he teach history, it shows them at every step the development of God's moral government. If he teach arithmetic, it may teach them so to number their days that they may apply their hearts unto wisdom. Shall the great work of a more thorough moral education of our children enlist the attention of *parents and teachers* ? As in all the history of man, intellect unrestrained by conscience, has subverted right and turned good into evil, in spite of the restrictions of law, so it will continue unless we give all the children of our land a careful training. If we do this, we have not only the testimony of the most experienced teachers, but of Holy Writ, that, if we "train up a child in the way he should go, when he is old he will *not* depart from it."

Several years since, the Hon. Horace Mann addressed a circular to each of the following distinguished educators :—John Griscom, Esq., David P. Page, Esq., Solomon Adams, Esq., E. A. Andrews, Esq., Rev. Jacob Abbott, Roger S. Howard, Esq., F. A. Adams, Esq., and Miss Catherine Beecher, propounding the following question :

Should all our schools be kept by teachers of high intellectual and moral qualifications, and should all the children in the community be brought within these schools for ten months in a year from the age of four to that of sixteen years ; then what a proportion—what percentage—of such children as you have under your care, could in your opinion be so educated and trained, that their existence on going out into the world would be a benefit and not a detriment, an honor and not a shame to society ? Or, if all

children were brought within the salutary and auspicious influences I have here supposed, what percentage of them should you pronounce to be irreclaimable and hopeless?

With singular unanimity, the persons to whom these inquiries were addressed, expressed themselves as follows :

Mr. Griscom, a teacher for forty three years, replied : My belief is that, under the conditions mentioned in your circular, not more than two per cent. would be irreclaimable nuisances to society, and that 95 per cent. would be supporters of the moral welfare of the community in which they resided. Finally, in the predicament last stated in the circular, and supposing the teachers to be imbued with the gospel spirit, I believe there would not be more than *one half of one per cent.* of the children educated, on whom a wise judge would be compelled to pronounce the doom of hopelessness and irreclaimability.

Mr. Page says, under the circumstances stated, I should scarcely expect, after the first generation of children submitted to the experiment, to fail in a single case to secure the results you have named.

Mr. S. Adams says : so far as my experience goes, so far as my experience of the knowledge of others extends, so far as the statistics of crime throw any light on the subject, I should confidently expect that ninety nine in a hundred, and I think even more, with such means of education as you have supposed, and with such divine favor as we are authorized to expect, would become good members of society, the supporters of order and law, truth and justice and all righteousness.

Rev. J. Abbot replies : If all our schools were under the charge of teachers possessing what I regard as the right intellectual and moral qualifications, and if all the children in the community were brought under the influence of these schools for ten months in a year, I think the work of training up the *whole community* to intelligence and virtue would soon be accomplished, as completely as any human end can be obtained by human means.

Mr. F. A. Adams had met with but two boys out of nearly four hundred, who had been under his care, of whose correct conduct under the circumstances supposed, he would have any doubt ; and even them he could not regard as utterly irreclaimable.

Mr. E. A. Andrews replies : on these conditions, and under these circumstances, I do not hesitate to express the opinion that the failures need not be—*would not be*—one per cent.

Miss Beecher says ; Let it be so arranged that all these children shall remain till sixteen under their teacher, and also that they shall spend their lives in this city (*i. e.*, the city where they had been taught), and I have no hesitation in saying I do not believe that *one*, no not a single one would fail of proving a respectable and prosperous member of society ; nay, more, I believe every one would, after the close of life, find admission into the world of peace and love.

Fellow teachers, with all this weighty evidence before us of the responsibility resting upon those who take it upon themselves to educate the children of our land, is there not something to inspire us with a nobler energy a warmer zeal ? Is there not something to incite us to look around and see what the youth are demanding at our hands ?

The youth of America have a glorious field of exertion before them. That they may appreciate its duties and rewards and be prepared for its offers and demands, should be the sincere wish of every one interested in the progress and prospects of our beloved country. Impressed with these considerations I earnestly hope that no efforts shall be spared, no means lost sight of that shall in any way lead to the furtherance of their temporal and eternal interests. Prominent among other means, I anxiously hope that God's Holy Word may be earnestly commended to their careful attention. Let this precious volume have its proper influence on the hearts of our youth, and our liberties are safe, our country blessed, the world is safe and the great mission of this nation will be accomplished—the end reached. There is not a virtue that can endear them to their country, nor a hope that can throb in their bosoms, in the prospect of future happiness, that has not its foundation in this sacred book, for it is the charter of charters, the palladium of liberty, the standard of righteousness.

Let the exercises of the day in all your schools be opened by reading a portion of the sacred scriptures. Let it not be done as if it were a mere exercise in elocution, but so read as to bring out the meaning and get the sentiment, if possible, in contact with the hearer's soul. Let the truth of inspiration come among your child-

ren as the rains of heaven, to irrigate and bless. Let it come like the air of heaven, full, and fresh, and free. Truth, as it beams out in every day's recitation, as it is exhibited in every department of nature, as it stands in demonstration on the black board, is powerful, convincing, disciplinary. But truth as it looms up from the sacred pages goes to the very soul, affording all those invigorating and life giving principles which make the fully formed man, and fit him for all the exigencies of life. Let this exercise be accompanied with the singing of a hymn. It subdues uncouth manners. It allays wicked propensities. It soothes irritation. It awakens and elevates the higher nature. It opens up the avenues of the soul. It nourishes the growth of real character. If this exercise be followed by the observance of prayer, it will make still deeper the moral effect. There is an indistinct sense lingering in the minds of even the most reckless that somehow those interests we hold most dear are safer with it. It diffuses a hallowed influence over the restless and eager life. It awakens strong resolves and pure aspirations and calls down blessings from heaven, providing it comes from the lips of him whose soul is imbued with the love of truth. Let the teacher tell his real wants as if addressing a father, and an almost nameless power and impression will go with such devotions. Artifice will be expelled by it. The iniquities of invention of restless children in thought or action will rarely trespass on the sanctity of this hour. And can it be believed for a moment that He of whom it is affirmed that he numbers the hairs of our head, and notices the fall of the sparrow, and who compresses the whole mystery of prayer in those gracious words, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name believing that ye shall receive," will not hear and answer the humble petition as the devoted teacher asks blessings upon himself and his pupils? I had almost said it were a libel on the character of God to believe it.

Let us one and all, then, turn our thoughts more prominently to the moral improvement of our schools, and not allow ourselves to be engaged in building mere intellectual superstructures, though admired by the world around, perfectly conscious that we are building upon the sand, which must soon give way to the driving storms and beating tempests of life, only to leave them a moral ruin, all the more unsightly and pitiful if decorated with ornaments that learning, genius and taste have entwined around their fallen columns.

But from our stand point to-day, while we may in some degree appreciate the necessity of renewed efforts in our calling, to stimulate us still more, let us try to catch a glimpse of the distant goal that is before us, and anticipate the longing of future generations for that solid truth which we alone transmit. Down the vista of history we have seen the rise and fall of nations, we have contemplated their intellectual achievements, their unrivaled skill in the arts, their perfections of science and literature; but we have never seen the parallel to our own times. Here a new spirit stands before us, new motives call us to action. On us as individuals and teachers devolves the solemn responsibility of exerting all our energies to uplift the masses to the dignity of Christian citizens. Let us strive with all our power to advance the noble work by guiding, directing and counseling those committed to our care, feeling that every effort, however humble, will aid in achieving the glory of a nation, the advancement of our race, and in crowning the clustering hopes of humanity with more than a full fruition.

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